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Admiral Stansfield Turner

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ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: Good evening. Welcome. We're delighted to have you with us, have this interest in our activities out here at the CIA.

I'd like to take a few minutes to talk with you before we engage in a dialogue and some questions and your thoughts and suggestions to talk to you about why I think it's important that we have good intelligence in the 1980s, and what it takes, in my opinion, to be sure that this country does have that as we go forward.

I happen to think that the 1980s are going to be a more precarious decade for this country than were the '60s or the '70s, for instance. And let me just give you three reasons why I feel that way.

In the '80s, the United States will face the first Soviet leadership that has not felt militarily inferior to the United States. Now, that's a change that really affects how we proceed with our foreign policy. To the degree the Soviets perceive that, we must deal with them differently. To the degree that the rest of the world perceives a growing sense of military parity with the Soviet Union and the United States, we must deal with the rest of the world differently.

It does not mean that we need be weaker, that we need be less resolute in our approach to foreign policy. But it does, I believe, mean that we have to be more astute.

A second change in the world of the '80s is that the developed countries, like ourselves and Western Europe and Japan, will not, I believe, be able to count on the same high rate of economic growth that we've known for a long time. One reason for that is that in developed countries economic growth is directly related to the increase in the rate of energy supply. We at the Central Intelligence Agency believe that in the 1980s, through most of the decade, the Free World will be lucky if the supply of energy available to it -- coal, nuclear, oil, thermal -- whatever you may have -- be lucky if it grows at the rate of one or two percent a year. And historically, that will not permit rates of growth of gross national product in developed countries of four, five, and six percent.

Now, on top of that, in looking at the oil situation, in 1980 the oil-producing countries of OPEC will cream off the top of world trade some $110 billion. Now, that's just a number to you, and billions don't mean anything to any of us. But let me put it in perspective. Because the same number two years ago ago, in 1978, was $2 billion. Now, a change of that magnitude is going to have a startling effect on the world economies.

Let me give you a little background. Why does it fluctuate like this? In 1973 the OPEC countries increased the price of oil by 350 percent. And you remember what it did to all of us. And at that time, the excess money that they had, after they'd bought everything that they were going to buy from us and after they'd sold all their oil, was maybe 50 or 60 billion dollars. But between then and 1978, it had diminished to $2 billion in excess.

Why? Well, first, they were buying more from us. They were wealthier and they did that. But secondly, we ate that surplus away by inflation. We, in effect, charged them more for the same things they were buying.

So, in 1979 they retaliated and increased the price of oil about 125 percent. And we're back now to where this year they will have a surplus, after they buy everything they're going to buy from us, of $110 billion.

But the significant point is, they will not again let us eat that way by inflation. They've learned their lesson and they're going to index the price of oil to the rate of inflation in the West. And even more, they'll index it, too, to our rate of growth of gross national product. They are going to grow with us. They're going to keep up with our inflationary rate.

And that means we have a $110 billion, what they call, recycling problem. Dollars, money that would have once gone to other countries is now accumulating in the Arab countries. And it really impacts on the flow of world trade and world economies.

A third factor is that in the 1980s we're not going to be able to deal with our own allies in the same way we have in years past. The same mechanisms, the same formulas that we've used for dealing with NATO, with Japan are not likely to work as well in the 1980s. Those countries are strong politically, they're independent, they have good economies, and they want a stronger voice in the councils of the alliances.

I don't predict the alliance is going to weaken, but I'm saying we have to deal with it differently.

Now, what do all three of these factors mean for us as Americans? They mean, I believe, that we have to be more astute, more well-informed, better able to predict the trends of events, to understand the culture, the attitudes, the aspirations of peoples in foreign countries with whom we have to deal. And I believe that in the '80s getting that kind of information, being well-informed is going to be more difficult than it's been in the past. Other countries are more sophisticated. They're more aware of intelligence methods that we use and others use to collect information. And we're going to have to be more on our toes as an

intelligence community on behalf of our country.

What do we have to do? A number of things that we within the intelligence world have to do on our own, a number of changes that we have to make. But we also need some legislation, I believe, to help support us.

Let me discuss each of those two briefly.

One of the first things we have to do is adapt to the changing world of technology. American technology is so great today that it is giving to us in the intelligence world burgeoning capabilities to collect data, to gather information, with our satellite systems, with our signals-intelligence systems placed around the world, listen to signals of various sites -- sorts, and our photographic satellites, and so on. It challenges us to absorb, to use, to make best advantage of this increasing flow of data, and to figure out how much is enough. Because technology can just keep giving us more and more, at more and more cost to you and me, as taxpayers, as well.

We also have to be sure that we recognize, with this great plethora of data that's available to us through these technical systems, that we don't underutilize or fail to recognize the importance of the traditional human intelligence systems, traditional espionage. Because in point of fact, even though we've got so much more data coming in from the technical world, we need the human intelligence even more. The more you get, the more you want to know. And the more you have in terms of this technically-collected data, the more often it comes to you to say, "But why did those things happen that we saw on the pictures?" Or, "Why did they build that radar that we heard in the signals?" and so on. "What is it for?" And here's where you want the activity of espionage to tell you what people are thinking and why they are doing what they do.

So, too, we are challenged to expand our techniques and our capabilities in that area.

In addition, we must be challenged here to do a much broader scope of analysis. It does no good to collect all this information unless you know how to interpret it, to analyze it, to do something with it so that our policymakers can interpret it properly and take decisions to our best advantage.

When we first started here in the Central Intelligence Agency, we focused on the Soviet Union or the Communist Bloc, and we focused largely on military matters. Today, as you can well appreciate, we're so far beyond that. We have to be into almost all of the countries of the world. We have to be concerned with economics and politics and terrorism and narcotics and the health of foreign leaders and the grain production in the Soviet Union,

and many, many -- in fact, almost all academic disciplines. And it is a great challenge to us to make that expansion, to develop analysts here who are truly expert on these different areas of the world, on these different disciplines and problems.

And those things -- adapting to the technical-collection world, continuing to improve our human intelligence, and expanding the scope and quality of our analysis -- are things that we can do and we are doing on our own.

One area we do need legislative support, and I'd like to mention it to you, because sometimes it gets into the press and is misunderstood. The intelligence function of our country is a much more public institution today than it was six or seven years ago. It is, in fact, the most public secret intelligence service that the world has ever had.

Yes, there is something of a contradiction here. And we are, as a nation, in the midst of a great experiment, a great experiment of determining whether you can have an effective secret intelligence service in a democratic society that wants to adhere to the principles of freedom, freedom of expression, and wants to be sure that what the secret intelligence services do is within the bounds of nationally endorsed properiety.

And finding that line is difficult. And it's difficult particularly today because our problem is compounded by a post-Vietnam, post-Watergate syndrome in this country that says we must disclose everything to everybody. And the investigative reporter who spills the secret material is the hero of our society.

And I say here we do need, if we're going to have a right balance between a secret intelligence service and an open society, some legislative help, so the rules, the guidelines, both for the public and for us, are laid down more clearly.

And I'm very grateful to report to you that of the four pieces of legislation we consider most essential here, two of them passed the Congress in October and are now in effect. And we're very pleased.

Briefly, though, let me describe them, because they did receive controversial press.

The first concerns what's known as covert action. Now, covert action is not really intelligence. Covert action is the effort of this country to influence events in a foreing country without the source of that influencing becoming apparent. Three or four years ago it was a bad word. People wanted to outlaw it. Today the country has recognized it differently. It recognizes that somewhere between doing nothing and sending in the Marines,

we ought to be able to support the United States position in other parts of the world. And so covert action is back in our diplomatic portfolio in a more respectable manner. And it belongs there, in proper perspective.

But in 1974, when there was this anti-covert-action attitude, the Congress passed a law which said whenever the Central Intelligence Agency undertakes, with presidential authorization, a covert action, it must notify the appropriate committees of the Congress. And they defined that subsequently as eight committees. I have a hard time persuading some people they should risk their lives, and then tell them I'm only going to have to go up and tell 200 people on Capitol Hill about their covert activities.

The Congress saw that, and in October narrowed it to two committees, the two oversight committees for intelligence, one in each chamber of the Congress. And those are the ones we notify today. But represented on those two committees are members of Congress from each of the other six committees. So that if it is genuinely in need of those other six committees to understand what we are doing on covert action, there is somebody on that committee who can so inform them. But we don't have this extensive notification that we've been subject to before.

The second legislation that passed is on what's known as gray mail. Gray mail is the act of a defense lawyer demanding, when the government is prosecuting an espionage case, demading that we produce all manner of classified information, supposedly for his use in defending his client. Of course, the real purpose is to hope that we will judge the release of this information for the defense more injurious to the national interest than prosecution. And we have, in some cases, had to withdraw, for fear of exposure of information in support of the case.

This new law allows the judge to have in camera hearings and determine the relevancy of the material. In some cases, clearly, classified information must be adduced in order to give the defense a proper opportunity to carry its case. But the judge now can decide whether that is an irrelevant issue or whether, in fact, it is really germane. And we can, therefore, be more certain of being able to prosecute espionage cases when it's necessary.

Now, the legislation that we need, and hopefully will obtain from the next session of the Congress, is twofold. The first concerns what we call identities, and it's called identities legislation. It will make it a crime to disclose the identity of CIA officials who are operating under cover -- that is, not acknowledging that they work for the CIA -- or individuals overseas in foreign countries who work for us on a clandestine basis.

Today, there are people who callously -- no, traitorously disclose the names of these people deliberately, with intent to undermine the intelligence capabilities which the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States have duly authorized, at your and my expense. And yet we cannot prosecute them.

It is unreasonable, in my view, to ask Americans serving in the CIA to go overseas, in the spirit of lawlessness that exists in many areas of the world today, and expose themselves in a risky profession if we cannot at least give them reasonable assurance that their identity will be protected.

In 1975 we did not protect the identity of Joseph Welch, our chief of station in Athens, and he was murdered shortly after his name was disclosed by people of this type.

In July of this year, an associate of the man who's most behind this, Philip Agee, a man named Louis Wolfe, went to Jamaica, and he went on television and he put up the pictures of 15 American employees of the embassy. He gave their home addresses, their telephone numbers and their license plate numbers, and he claimed they were all working for the CIA to destabilize the government of Jamaica. Two nights later, the home of one of them was shot up. The bullet went right through the bedroom of a young daughter. Fortunately, she was not there. The next night, another house was almost attacked, but the police interrupted it.

We can't call, on the one hand, for better intelligence in the 1980s and expect our people to endure this kind of unnecessary risk to their and others' lives.

Clearly, there is a problem here, a problem of interferring with the freedom of the press to talk about anybody. And we don't want to interfere with that. And the legislation that has been through several of the committees of the Congress very carefully distinguishes between people who just mention our employees' names and those who do so with a deliberate pattern to disclose them and to injure our intelligence capacities. And we believe the line is so well drawn in this law that it need not inhibit the freedom of the press. And we hope it will pass this week in the House, and possibly later in this session -- or, if not, early in the next session -- in the Senate.

The fourth piece of legislation is what's known as the Freedom of Information Act. You're probably familiar with this. You, the Soviet Embassy, anybody can write to us and demand information from our files, under the Freedom of Information Act, and I must respond within 10 days, regardless of who you are.

Now, the problem here is not that the Freedom of Information Act, in fact, challenges our ability to keep our secrets.

Because there is due provision in it for the protection of security information, classified information. We do not have to disclose that. And the only time we've disclosed it that I know of, under the Freedom of Information Act, is when somebody marked out all the things that weren't supposed to be released, and the person releasing them made a mistake and released that instead of the other.

The problem is one of perception. Because when we go to somebody and say, "Will you help us get some information of great value to us, but at possible risk to your life?" and they say to us, "But will your Freedom of Information Act require you to put my name in the Washington Post?" today we cannot look them in the eye and say, "Absolutely no." We can say, "No. That's a classified matter, and we don't have to disclose it." But every day, practically, we are being challenged in the courts as to what is truly classified. Are we unduly classifying things for this purpose?

And so I have to, in honesty, say to such an individual, "As long as I keep winning those court cases, I won't have to disclose your name."

"Thanks very much."

They're not too enthusiastic.

So, we want exemption for information like that, that discloses how we obtained our information. And, in fact, that really will not hurt the public's access to what they need from our files. Because information then obtained from this individual I referred to is eventually put into our analysis. And you hide when you do that how you got it, and you put it in with all the information about that general subject. And that file, which came from what the individual told us, is subject, and would be subject, to the Freedom of Information Act. It's just how we got it that would not be. And we do need that.

Let me sum up by saying that we, as Americans, are in a dilemma. All of us want to have as open a society as possible and a government that reflects that kind of openness. And yet all of us are aware, too, that this country cannot be caught unawares, that we should not be taken advantage of by others because we do not know what is going on, and because most countries, of course, do not share nearly as much with their publics or with the world as do we.

So the issue today is: Can we have both as open a government as possible and a government that is effectively defended by a good intelligence, a good secret intelligence service? I think we can. I think we must. And I think the issue is not unleashing the CIA, the issue is largely one of keeping a modicum

of secrecy, being able to have enough secrets that our intelligence service can operate effectively, to setting out the rules for that to be -- in a way that will insure they do not impinge on the rights of Americans more than is absolutely essential.

Today and over the last four or five years, we have developed a process of oversight in the Executive Branch, a process of oversight in the Legislative Branch which I believe gives you, as the American public, adequate insurance that we are proceeding in the right way with this balance between openness and secrecy. And I believe we're moving very much in the right direction. And these several legislative remedies that I have outlined, a continued working and understanding with the oversight committees in the Congress, and the continued support of people like yourselves, who are interested enough to come and be with us this evening, is going to carry us to proving that you can, in fact, have a secret intelligence service and preserve your democratic freedoms.

Thank you.

[Applause]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'd like to hear your views or get your comments on what we can do better or what's on your mind.

MAN: What sort of impact, if any, will the change of Administration have on the CIA? In terms of its philosophy...

ADMIRAL TURNER: Philosophy?

MAN: In terms of its philosophy or its [unintelligible]? Does a change in Administration really have an impact, if any, on the CIA?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the last change of Administration did from my point of view, because I wasn't here. So I can't really tell you just how much it changed, because I don't have a benchmark.

But let me make one point: that this is not a political agency, and it is not and should not be viewed as a place where people come and go because of political loyalties. The reason for having a CIA, set out in the law of 1947, or one of the reasons, is to insure that there is one place within the government where intelligence information is sifted and analyzed that has no ax to grind, no Democrat or Republican ax, no anti-Soviet or pro-Soviet policy ax, no "Let's build MX" or "Don't build MX" ax, no ax for a stringent control on the monetary policy, or a loose one.

In short, every other source of intelligence in our government, except this one right here, reports to a policymaker.

And it's more difficult for those subordinate intelligence chiefs to go up and say, "Boss, the information that I've got says your policy is just off the track." But that's what we're here to do.

So, we try to stay out of both the political stream of domestic politics -- we do stay out of it thoroughly. And we also stay out of the policy-formulating phase within the government. And we hope that we're a rather neutral organization.

MAN: Sir, you commented on -- your opening remark that you're apprehensive of the nations perceiving the United States as no longer a superior force in the military sense. We've heard conflicting stories as to the parity of the Soviet Union, from different viewpoints and different elements.

Are you permitted to give us an indication as to what you think the relative strength in the '80s in fact is, rather than what it's perceived as?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'll try. It's a very complex issue, and it often comes down to, "Is the glass half-full or half-empty?" and how you put the emphasis on the description.

There are several balances that one has to consider. One is the strategic nuclear force balance, the intercontinental threat of devastating warfare. And over the years, starting from a monopoly on the part of the United States, obviously, the Soviets have closed the gap.

Now, today, are they equal or are they a little bit ahead or a little bit behind? If I gave you all the facts in the house here, you'd all come to slightly different conclusions. But it's somewhere in that -- in that range.

But a cardinal fact still persists, and that is that either one of us could absorb attack by the other and still devastate the attacker. It's a somewhat, in my opinion, academic issue, other than what you get as political leverage from these perceptions. And that's why I emphasize that. But the hard facts are that we both have oodles and oodles of capability.

Now, in the conventional fields, the major issue is NATO versus the Warsaw Pact in Europe. For many years NATO has relied upon a higher quality of weapons to offset a larger quantity on the Soviet side. Over the years, the Soviets have just steadily gone on improving and increasing their own weaponry. And we are now where we don't have as big a qualitative lead as we did. And they, of course, still have the quantitative lead.

I don't think they have reached the point where initiating war against NATO is an inviting or a promising thing for them. But again, the perception that they're ahead is some-

thing that does have an effect on people.

In short, I don't believe we're, in either case, going to have an Armageddon tomorrow. But I believe our resolve, our willingness to maintain a necessary level of military force to counter these impressions is going to be very critical to the perception of people, and thereby to their reactions on the world scene.

MAN: Admiral Turner, people I know abroad, particularly in Europe, and people who are generally pro-American, tend to be quite critical about what they perceive as our excessive openness and excessive disclosures, many of which you've described here today, official and unofficial.

And my question to you: Does that not inhibit the traditional cooperation in sharing of intelligence information between our country and our allies, who also have their own sources? And in the past it's been, I think, normal to have a good exchange.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, it does. And we have to overcome that in several ways. These pieces of legislation that I say will, in many cases, help change the perception -- the Freedom of Information Act -- so that they will understand that they are in fact protected.

In addition, we are -- we are trailblazing. The principal people we exchange intelligence with, of course, are our NATO allies people that are basically very democratic, like ourselves. And let me assure you that as I watch them in most of those countries, these same trends -- they're just a little bit behind us, and they're coming to a greater sense of openness. The British Official Secrets Act is sort of crumbling over there.

Now, nobody is as open as we are yet. But we must make them understand that we are able to do this within bounds of freedom -- I mean within bounds of reasonableness.

And finally, I will say this, that there are only two intelligence services in the world today that are really full intelligence services, ourselves and the KGB. We're the only two who can afford all these wizardries, the worldwide coverage. So these other allies, while they're good in their sphere, they're very dependent upon us for coverage that they cannot do.

So, we have some leverage on keeping things cooperative.

MAN: Sir, what role, if any, can the CIA play in inhibiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Third World?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, we play a substantial role here. We have a whole section of our analytic agency and many of our

people in the collection side who try to find out where people are going to break through and proliferate nuclear weapons. We have a great many techniques for trying to detect the improper flow of fissionable materials, to detect when countries are building facilities in which they can do that.

It is not our job to prevent it, but it is our job to alert the policymakers that there is a danger in this country or that of a nuclear weapons fabrication facility coming into being. And then, of course, our policymakers have to decide how they're going to try to thwart it.

MAN: How would you compare the -- as much as you can -- the effectiveness of the CIA versus the KGB?

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I haven't had a chance to sit down with Mr. Andropov.

I'll tell you a funny story. I was ushering at church one Sunday on the outside door. As a gentleman, two gentlemen were leaving, I tried to be friendly, as you would. One gentleman with an accent said, "This is my brother from Russia. He does not speak English."

And I said, "Well, I'm very pleased to meet you."

And the brother, whom I know a little bit, turned to his Russian brother and said, "This is the chief of the CIA," and the man almost blanched on the spot.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: He was planning to go home.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I said to him, though, I said, you know, "Tell your brother that I'll bet him a hundred to one that no American tourist was likely to meet Mr. Andropov coming out of church.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: We're better than the KGB. But I have to deduce that by the following logic: We have much greater technological capabilities than they, because of the advanced state of American industry over Soviet. So those things that I described at the beginning, we're better at.

They have much larger human intelligence activities

than we. But I don't think they're all that much better. I think we're very clever, we're very capable, and sometimes they're not. That's a difficult one to judge. I'm not sure why their human intelligence capability is so big, when they can read Aviation Week every week, anyway.

Most importantly, and germane to what we've been talking about most of the evening, it does you no good to get all this data, to spy, and so on, if you can't use the material sensibly. And I do not believe that the analytic organization in the KGB can be as sensible, can be as thorough, as analytic under a closed society, where if they come up with a wrong answer they may lose not only their job, but their head. Whereas here, as I said to you a minute ago, I look upon it very much as my job to tell the President or Secretary of State that I believe the facts of intelligence do not support the conclusions that he is espousing with respect to his policy in Country X. That's what I'm paid to do. I don't think in a closed totalitarian society you can do that as well, that you can encourage your analysts to be free-thinking and really explore the possibilities of what the information leads you to.

MAN: Admiral, you're barraged every day, almost, with questions of a technical or security nature. My question is a bit more personal. I have to preface it by saying that when General Maxwell Taylor was asked what he considered the most important lesson learned [unintelligible] confidant to Presidents, he said it was his sophomore high school debating team that best prepared him.

What do you feel, among your illustrious tours, has best prepared you to be the head of the CIA? [Unintelligible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's a heck of a lot tougher.

Well, it's somewhat hard to answer without maybe sounding a little egotistical, and I don't know how to put it.

I had the privilege, at age 17, of going to an Ivy League college of the same quality of the colleges and universities that you represent here, Amherst College, but smaller than yours. And a threshold event in my life was my first semester, when in a small college I was called into the dean's office to be told I had a schedule conflict in the courses that I wanted to take for my first semester. I can't imagine anybody being called in to the dean personally today. It's all done by computer. And when I couldn't take the two courses that conflicted, he said, "Why don't you take this art appreciation course?"

I was a football player. I didn't want to do anything with art. But, you know, I was a young kid, and the dean said,

"Take art appreciation." I took art appreciation.

I liked it so much, and I realized that there was a whole world out there that I knew nothing about, that I signed up for music appreciation the next semester, and so on. And if anything that's helped me, it was the liberal education there and at Oxford that made me say, "I love to be inquisitive. I like to know what's going on. And I don't want to know the surface view of it. I want to really understand what's making things tick." Whether it's you and you and I have a relationship. Whether it's why Mengistu is leading Ethiopia into the Soviet camp. Whether it's will the Soviets really have a decline in their oil output over the next few years, and why?

And I think without that, you can't be in this kind of a business, or the kind, even, that I was in before, in the military.

MAN: Admiral, we've heard quite a few questions and discussions about your role as the Director of Central Intelligence. Would you care to give us a [unintelligible] your role as the Director -- [unintelligible] Director of CIA, but your role as the Director of Central Intelligence and your responsibilities in that role?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, I would. As you point out, I have two jobs, by law -- really three: intelligence adviser to the President, head of the CIA, and Director of Central Intelligence, which is head of the intelligence community: the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Intelligence Bureau in the State Department, and intelligence activities in the Department of Energy, the FBI, the Department of Treasury, and so on.

In the community role, my job is to try to make these diverse elements that are under different management work together as a team. President Carter strengthened my hand in that role in a couple of ways. And what he did was to really give me more authority over the elements of the community that collect data, all this technical business and human intelligence business that I talked about earlier.

And it's important that we have reasonably strong control over that element, or those elements, those agencies. Why? It's a lot of money. It's a lot of risk, possible embarrassment. And in addition, as I did try to emphasize, you have to be a team.

You look on a photo and you see a new factory, and you say, "I wonder what that is." So you turn loose the signals people, and they can tell you that the line of communication from that factory goes to the nuclear department in the capital. And then you turn a human spy loose and you try to say, "Is it working

on nuclear power plants, or is it nuclear weapons?" It's that teamwork, you see, that is important.

The other half of intelligence, the analysis side, I do not have as tight control over those elements, those agencies that do the analysis. And that's quite proper. Because, back to what I was saying about the Soviets not being able to be as free in their expression of ideas when they analyze intelligence data, we want divergent views to come forward. We don't want to get stuck in a rut, where one dumkoff can kill the whole thing off and let only one hypothesis come forward. And so we do have competing analysis from Defense, from State, from CIA. And my job is to orchestrate that without controlling it, to try to make them work together so we don't all study the same thing and nobody studies this, but that I don't tell them what conclusions they are to come to.

It's a tough role because there isn't full authority, and there shouldn't be, in many ways. But I believe over the last five or six years -- I'm not trying to take credit for it, because I'm putting it back past my time -- the necessity for working together on both of these spheres, collection and analysis, is much more apparent to our own people, and we are working and operating much more as a team, as a community, than we have in the past. And it's very encouraging. And it will continue, I believe, in that direction.

WOMAN: [Inaudible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: Zero. But I won't turn them away. Nor will I fail, under some circumstances, to recruit them.

Our rules -- and Herb can give them to you in more detail than I, if you really would like to know them in specifics -- are that we certainly won't close the doors if a journalist wants to come in and volunteer information and give it to us. And we give lots of information, unclassified, to them.

But, on the other hand, if we have a situation where maybe the only person I can get inside the compound in Teheran to help me find out about the hostages is a journalist, I'm going to use him. That is, if I have to pay his way to Teheran to do that, I'm not going to shirk in the least. And I've said publicly that three times in my administration I have authorized that type of activity -- not that specific one. And it happens that in all three cases we never consummated it, we never used that journalist. For operational reasons, it just didn't happen to work out.

WOMAN: [Inaudible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, no. I have no authority over any

journalist. And he's -- he's free to take it or leave it, if I ask him to do it. And he's certainly free to publish whatever he wants after he has worked for us, without -- I mean other than the classified material that he's -- we're not going to control what he writes and says.

MAN: Admiral, you mentioned in your earlier remarks the gap between us and the Soviets, as far as military might was concerned, from the end of the war to now has closed. In your estimation, or can you say, whether it's the closing of the gap that maybe motivated the Soviets to move into Afghanistan, or were there any other reasons, or can you state the reasons?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It is my opinion that the closing of the gap was not necessary to make the Soviets willing to take that kind of an opportunity and that kind of a risk. Because I think they've done it for 35 years now, since World War II. When they've had an opportunity where they didn't think the United States would respond, they have probed, all around the globe. They've probed in Indonesia and had to fall back. They've probed in Egypt and had to fall back. They've probed in Somalia and had to fall back. And they'll keep probing until they feel the cost to them, militarily, politically, is going to be too high. And a lot of that cost will be measured, in their eyes as to how strong our response will be.

Whether they would have gone into Afghanistan if they had known in advance how strong our response was is very difficult to guess. I think they might well have anyway, because it's a tough spot for us, it's so far away.

But I don't think they need the emboldment, if that's a word, of their improved military position to undertake something like that.

MAN: Are there any early stages of Polish worker union development beginning to occur in other countries in Eastern Europe, and even possibly Russia?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, we've not seen that. There were some strikes in Russia preceding the Polish situation this summer because of shortages of food. Not things that got out of control or were very serious.

But one reason there has not been a spread of this virus is it's clear to the workers in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, which are the two that feel the most uncertainty today, that the regime would crack down quickly and very hard if they started the Polish kind of thing. In short, they're being intimidated by the ruthless of the regimes.

The regimes in East Germany and Czechoslovakia are clearly very nervous. As you know, the East Germans have cut off the flow of people back and forth to Poland, and even to West Germany. They're very nervous about it. But there are not manifestations in terms of agitation on the part of the people.

MAN: In what types of ways does the CIA conduct covert operations?

ADMIRAL TURNER: In what types of ways do we conduct covert operations? Three ways. We conduct propaganda that's not attributable to our country to influence the course of events in other countries. We undertake what we call political action, efforts to support political factions in free countries that are trying to keep those countries free. Sometimes that's financial support. Sometimes -- for instance, take a case. Take a case here:

Let's say that we would like to encourage Country X to vote a certain way on an issue in the United Nations. Well, Mr. Muskie can go to their foreign minister and say, "Joe, I think it would be a great idea if you would voted." What's the foreign minister going to think first? He's going to say, "Muskie's asking me that because that's good for the United States. I've got to see now if it's good for me, too." But maybe I can find somebody who will go to the foreign minister and say the same thing without that smell of suspicion. See what I mean?

And thirdly, there's what they call paramilitary support, providing weapons to people who want and need them, as we did, for instance, to, say, the Montagnards in Vietnam.

Those are the three generic forms of covert action.

MAN: ...the scenario that in the next decade or so the terrorist groups might acquire, or at least claim to acquire, a nuclear weapon of some sort. What do you envision the ability to prevent or be alerted to such nuclear blackmail [unintelligible]?

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's a difficult issue. Most of us think, and maybe hope, that it won't happen, because of the difficulties, and then because of what do you do with the thing. You know, is it really -- but people are crazy. So it's not out of the question.

I think there's a reasonable probability the world would know, and we might know first by clandestine means, because it isn't that easy to manufacture one, despite being able to get a kit from the newspapers or something. That is, actually physically handling this material, and so on, is a dangerous operation,

even if you've got the designs.

Therefore, the chances are that this would be a stolen weapon, in which case, since we own a large proportion of them, we might know, because the percentages are it would be one of ours. But if it were a Soviet stolen weapon, we might have to get it by intelligence.

I think we might well have some chance of that.

Preventing it? We try to keep track of terrorism all around the world, and we have been successful in some instances, a number of instances, in thwarting terrorist -- not this kind, but terrorist activities, by doing things to show them that they're exposed or they're not going to get away with it.

So we would be, hopefully, working it from that angle, as well as keeping track of the weapons.

It's my understanding that if we don't quit in a couple of minutes, there's going to be a starvation call around here. So I'll take one last question, if I may. On the aisle in the back.

MAN: Moving back to covert operations for a second. The gathering and the analysis of information seems to be a fairly passive role for the CIA. And yet covert operations is a more active role. Is the agency suited for actions both passive and active? And isn't that -- and how does that jibe with your mandate in 1947 as an information gatherer?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, our mandate in '47 wasn't exclusively to be a mandate gatherer. Though you're partially correct, in that it doesn't mention the covert side in the law. The history of the law does show that they acknowledged that that was going to be part of the function, and they didn't want to put it out in public, apparently.

The clandestine collection of intelligence is not quite as passive as you may indicate. And I think we are well equipped to do the active covert action side and the active collection side.

Interestingly, the burgeoning technology that I mentioned not only is for signals and photographic intelligence, it really is a big support to the active clandestine collection of intelligence: having the right kinds of equipment, the right kinds of communications, and so on.

So I think we're well equipped there with dedicated individuals and with high technology.

And I would close by saying to you that you can be grateful that you have the kind of people who are here as dedicated professionals in this organization. They're the heart of the team. They're what the Central Intelligence Agency is. And my viewing them for the these past years is a great reassurance to me, and I can pass that on to you, that there are people of this caliber, this quality, this dedication to our country.

And I'm most pleased to tell you that I see the young people coming in, those who came in at the height of the criticism of intelligence and those who are coming in today, as being of the same fine caliber and quality.

And, therefore, I'm optimistic that we're going to meet these challenges that lie before the intelligence community of your country.

Thank you for being with us.

[Applause]